THE GIRL WHO SMILES.

The wind was east, and the chimney smoked,
And the old brown house seemed dreary,
For nobody smiled, and nobody joked,
The young folks grumbled, the old folks croaked,
They had come home chilled and weary.

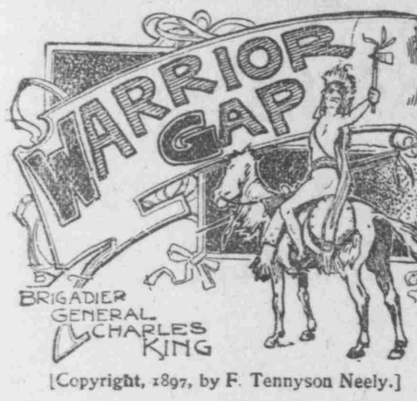
Then opened the door, and a girl came in;
Oh, she was homely—very;
Her nose was pug, and her cheek was thin,
There wasn't a dimple from brow to chin,
But her smile was bright and cheery.

She spoke not a word of the cold and damp,
Nor yet of the gloom about her,
But she mended the fire, and lighted the lamp,
And she put on the place a different stamp
From that it had had without her.

Her dress, which was something in sober brown,
And with dampness nearly dripping,
She changed for a bright, warm, crimson gown,
And she looked so gay when she so came down
They forgot that the air was nipping.

They forgot that the house was a dull old place,
And smoky from base to rafter,
And gloom departed from every face,
As they felt the charm of her mirthful grace,
And the cheer of her happy laughter.

Oh, give me the girl who will smile and sing
And make all glad together!
To be plain or fair is a lesser thing,
But a kind, unselfish heart can bring
Good cheer in the darkest weather.
—Mary A. Gillette, in Youth's Companion.



[Copyright, 1897, by F. Tennyson Neely.]

CHAPTER XI.—CONTINUED.

"Go and hurry that buggy," he ordered, as he crushed the sheet of paper on which he had been nervously figuring. Then, springing up, he began pacing his office with impatient stride. A clerk glanced quickly up from his desk, watched him one moment with attentive eye, and looked significantly at his neighbor. "Old man's getting worse rattled every day," was the comment, as the crash of wheels through loose gravel announced the coming of the buggy, and Burleigh hastened out, labored into his seat, and took the whip and reins. The blooded mare in the shafts darted forward at the instant, but he gathered and drew her in; the nervous creature almost settling on her haunches.

"Say to Capt. Newhall when he gets back—that I'll see him this evening," called Burleigh over his shoulder. "Now, damn you, go—if you want to!" and the lash fell on the glistening, quivering flank, and with her head pointed for the hard, open prairie, the pretty creature sped like mad over the smooth roadway and whirled the light buggy out past the scattered wooden tenements of the exterior limits of the frontier town—the tall white staff, tipped by its patch of color flapping in the mountain breeze, and the dingy wooden buildings on the distant bluff whirling into view as he spun around the corner where the village lost itself in the prairie; and there, long reaches ahead of him, just winding up the ascent to the post was a stylish team and trap. John Folsom and the girls had taken an early start and got ahead of him.

Old Stevens was up and about as Folsom's carriage drove swiftly through the garrison and passed straight out by the northeast gate. "I'll be back to see you in a moment," shouted the old driver smilelessly, as he shot by the lonely colonel, going, pepers in hand, to his office, and Stevens well knew he was in for trouble. Already the story was blazing about the post that nothing but the timely arrival of Dean and his men had saved Folsom's ranch, and Folsom's people. Already the men, wondering and indignant at their young leader's arrest, were shouting over the sutler's bar their peans in his praise, and their denunciation of his treatment. Over the meeting of sister and brother at the latter's little tent let us draw a veil. He stepped forth in a moment and bade his other visitors welcome, shook hands eagerly with Loomis and urged their coming in, but he never passed from under the awning or "fly," and Folsom well knew the reason.

"Jump out, daughter," he said to Pappoose, and Loomis assisted her to alight and led her straight up to Dean, and for the first time in those two years the ex-cadet captain and the whilom little schoolgirl with the heavy braids of hair looked into each other's eyes, and in Dean's there was amaze, and at least momentary delight. He still wore his field rig, and the rent in the dark-blue flannel shirt was still apparent. He was clasping Miss Folsom's hand and looking straight into the big dark eyes that were so unusually soft and humid, when Jessie's voice was heard as she came springing forth from the tent:

"Look, Nell, look! Your picture!" she cried, as with the bullet-marked carte de visite in her hand she flitted straight to her friend.

"Why, where did this come from?" asked Miss Folsom in surprise, "and what's happened to it?—all creased and black there!" Then both the girls and Loomis looked to him for explanation, while Folsom drove away, and even through the bronze and tan the boy was blushing.

"I—borrowed it for a minute—at the ranch just as Jake came in wounded, and there was no time to return it, you know. We had to gallop right out."

"Then—you had it with you in the Indian fight?" cried Jess, in thrilling excitement. "Really? Oh, Nell! How I wish it were mine. But how'd it get so blackened there—and crushed? You haven't told us."

"Tell you some other time, Jess. Don't crowd a fellow," he laughed. But when his eyes stole their one quick glance at Elinor, standing there in silence, he saw the color creeping up like sunset glow all over her beautiful face as she turned quickly away. Lannion had told them of the close shave the lieutenant had had and the havoc played by that bullet in the breast pocket of his hunting shirt.

CHAPTER XII.

Meantime "Old Pecksniff," as commentators of the day among the graceless subs were wont to call Col. Stevens, was having his bad quarter of an hour. Leaving his team with the orderly, John Folsom had stamped into his presence unannounced, and after his own vigorous fashion opened the ball as follows:

"Stevens, what in the devil has that young fellow done to deserve arrest?"

"Oh, ah, shut the door, Mr. Adjutant," said the commanding officer, apprehensively, to his staff officer, "and—d I desire to confer with Mr. Folsom a moment," whereat the adjutant took the hint and then hied himself out of the room.

"Now, ah, in the first place, Mr. Folsom, this is rather a long and—d painful story. I'm—m—ah, ah—in a peculiar position."

"For God's sake talk like a man and not like Burleigh," broke in the old trader, impulsively. "I've known you off and on over 20 years, and you never used to talk in this asinine way until you got to running with him. Come right to the point— What crime is young Dean charged with? Those girls of mine will have to know it. They will know he's in arrest. What can I tell them?"

"Crime—ah—is hardly the word, Folsom. There has been a misunderstanding of orders, in short, and he was placed under arrest before—ah—before I had been furnished with a mass of information that should have been sent to me before."

"Well, what fault is that of his? See here, man, you don't mean to say it is because he didn't get here three days ago? That's no crime, and I haven't knocked around with the army the last 40 years not to know the regulations in such matters. Do you mean without ever hearing what kept him and what splendid, spirited service he rendered there along the Laramie, that you've humiliated that fine young fellow and put him in arrest?"

Pecksniff whirled around in his chair. "Really now, Mr. Folsom, I can't permit you to instruct me in my military duties. You have no conception of the way in which I've been ignored and misled in this matter. There are collateral circumstances brought about, er—forced on me in fact, by injudicious friends of this young man, and he—he must blame them—he must blame them, not me. Now if you'll permit me to glance over this mass of matter, I can the sooner do justice in the premises." And over his goggles the colonel looked pleadingly up into his visitor's irate features.

"Read all you like, but be quick about it," was the angry rejoinder. "I want to take that boy back with me to town and confront him with one of his accusers this very day — the man I believe, by the ghost of Jim Bridger, is at the bottom of the whole business!" and Folsom flopped heavily and disgustedly into a chair, at sound of a rap at the door, which opened an inch and the adjutant's nose became visible at the crack.

"Maj. Burleigh, sir, would like to see you."

"And I'd like to see Maj. Burleigh!" stormed Folsom, springing to his feet. Commanding officers of the Stevens stamp had no terrors for him. He had known his man too long.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen!" cried Pecksniff, "I can have no disturbance now over this unfortunate matter. Really, Mr. Folsom, I cannot permit my office to be the scene of any—of any—"

But his words wandered aimlessly away into space as he discovered he had no listener. Folsom, finding that the major had apparently changed his mind and was not coming in, had changed his plan and was going out. He overtook Burleigh on the boardwalk in front and went straight to the point.

"Maj. Burleigh, you told me a short time ago that you had nothing to do with the allegations against this young gentleman who was placed in arrest here this afternoon, yet I learn from my own daughter that you spoke of him to a brother officer of his in terms of disparagement the day you got aboard the car at Sidney. Mr. Loomis corroborates it and so does Miss Dean. I've heard of two other instances of your speaking sneeringly of him. Now I ask you as man to man what it is you have to tell? He has saved the lives of my son, his wife and child and the people of the ranch, and by the Eternal I'm his friend and mean to see justice done him!"

Burleigh listened with solemn face and with no attempt to interrupt. He waited patiently until Folsom came to a full stop before he spoke at all. Then his voice was eloquent of undeserved rebuke—of infinite sympathy. "Mr. Folsom," he said, "it would be useless for me to deny that before I knew your charming daughter or her—ah—very interesting friend I did speak in their presence—ah—incautiously, perhaps, of Mr. Dean, but it was in continuance of a conversation begun before we boarded the car, and what I said was more in sorrow than in criticism. The young gentleman had attracted my attention—my favorable—ah—opinion on the trip to the Big Horn, and I was—ah—simply disappointed in his conduct on the way back. It was perhaps due to—ah—inexperience only, and my whole object in coming here in haste this afternoon was to bear testimony to his ability and zeal as a troop commander, and to urge —ah—Col. Stevens to reconsider his action and restore him at once to duty. I had hoped, sir, to be here—ah—ahead of you and to have driven him in my buggy—ah—to meet you, but I am disappointed—I am disappointed in more ways than one."

Folsom stood and wiped his streaming face and looked the speaker square in the eye, and Burleigh stood the scrutiny with unlooked-for nerve. Long years at the poker-table had given him command of his features, and the faculty of appearing the personification of serene confidence in his "hand," when the twitching of a nerve might cost a thousand dollars. Folsom was no match for him in such a game. Little by little the anger and suspicion faded from his eyes, and a shame-faced look crept into them. Had he really so misjudged, so wronged this gentleman? Certainly there was every appearance of genuine sympathy and feeling in Burleigh's benevolent features. Certainly he was here almost as soon as he himself had come, and very possibly for the same purpose. It was all that old fool Pecksniff's doing after all. Folsom had known him for years and always as more or less of an ass—a man of so little judgment that, though a major in the line at the outbreak of the war, he had never been trusted with a command in the field, and here he was now a full colonel with only three companies left him. Burleigh saw his bluff was telling, and he took courage.

"Come with me," he said, "and let me reassure you," and the doors of the commanding officer's sanctum opened at once to the omnipotent disburser of government good things, Folsom following at his heels. "Col. Stevens," he began, the moment he was inside, and before the colonel could speak at all, "in a moment of exasperation and extreme nervous—ah—depression the night I—er—started east so hurriedly after a most exhausting journey from the Big Horn, I spoke disparagingly of the action of Lieut. Dean in face of the Indians the day we met Red Cloud's band, but on mature reflection I am convinced I misjudged him. I have been thinking it all over. I recall how vigilant and dutiful he was at all times, and my object in hurrying out here to-day at—ah—almost the instant I heard of his arrest, was to put in the best words I could think of in his behalf—to—ah—urge you to reconsider your action, especially in view of all the—e—ah—encomiums passed upon his conduct in this recent raid on the Laramie."

The colonel whirled around upon him as he had on Folsom. "Maj. Burleigh," he began, "I call you to witness that I am the most abused man in the army. Here I am, sir, 35 years in service, a full colonel, with a war record with the regulars that should command respect, absolutely ignored by these mushroom generals at Omaha and elsewhere—stripped of my command and kept in ignorance of the movements of my subordinates. Why, sir," he continued, lashing himself on, as he rose from his chair, "here's my junior at Frayne giving orders to my troop, sir; presumes to send them scouting the Laramie bottoms, when every man is needed here, and then, when, as it happens, my officer and his men get into a fight and drive the Indians, to whom does he report, sir? Not to me, sir—not to his legitimate commander, but he sends couriers to Laramie and to Frayne, and ignores me entirely."

A light dawned on Burleigh in an instant. Well he knew that Dean's reasons for sending couriers to those guard posts of the Platte were to warn them that a war party had crossed into their territory, and was now in flight. There was nothing to be gained by sending a man galloping back to the line of the railway 75 miles to the rear—no earthly reason for his doing so. But the fact that he had sent runners to officers junior in rank to Stevens, and had not sent one to him, fairly "stuck in the crop" of the captious old commander, and he had determined to give the youngster a lesson. But now the mail was in, and dispatches from various quarters, and a telegram from Omaha directing him to convey to Lieut. Dean the thanks and congratulations of the general commanding the department, who had just received full particulars by wire from Cheyenne, and Stevens was glad enough to drop the game, and Burleigh equally glad of this chance to impress Folsom with the sense of his influence, as well as of his justice.

"I admit all you say, colonel. I have long—ah—considered you most unfairly treated, but really—ah—in this case of Lieut. Dean's, it is, as I said before, inexperience and—ah—the result of—ah—er—not unnatural loss of—er—balance at a most exciting time. A word of—ah—admonition, if you will pardon my suggestion, is all he probably needs, for he has really behaved very well—ah—surprisingly well in conducting this—ah—pursuit."

And so was it settled that later the colonel was to see Mr. Dean and admonish accordingly, but that meantime the adjutant should go and whisper in his ear that his arrest was ended, and all would be explained later, thereby releasing him before the girls discovered the fact that he was confined to his tent.

But the adjutant came too late. The tearful eyes of one, the flushed and anxious faces of both damsels, and the set look in the eyes of both the young officers at Dean's tent, as the adjutant approached, told him the cat was out of the bag. "The explanation cannot be made too promptly for me, sir," said Dean, as he received the colonel's message and permitted the adjutant to depart without presenting him to the two prettiest girls he had seen in a year. "Now, Loomis, just as quick as possible I want you to go with me to that man Burleigh. I'll cram his words down his throat."

"Hush, Dean, of course, I'll stand by you! But both girls are looking. Wait until to-morrow."

How many a project for the morrow is dwarfed or drowned by events unlooked for—unsuspected at the time! Not ten minutes later Folsom and Burleigh came strolling together to the little tent. Ashamed of his apparently unjust accusation, Folsom had begged the quartermaster's pardon and insisted on his coming with him and seeing the young people before driving back to town. The horses were being groomed at the picket line. The western sun was low. Long shadows were thrown out over the sward and the air was full of life and exhilaration. The somber fears that had oppressed the quartermaster an hour earlier were retiring before a hope that then he dare not entertain.

"You—you stood by me like a trump, Burleigh," old Folsom was saying, "even after I'd abused you like a thief. If I can ever do you a good turn don't fail to let me know."

And Burleigh was thinking then and there how desperately in need of a good turn he stood that minute. What if Folsom would back him? What if—

But as they came in full view of the picket line beyond the row of tents, the major's eagerly searching gaze was rewarded by a sight that gave him a sudden pause. Halted and examining with almost professional interest the good points of a handsome little bay, Lieut. Loomis and Jessie Dean were in animated chat. Halted and facing each other, he with glowing admiration in his frank blue eyes, she with shy pleasure in her joyous face, Dean and Elinor Folsom stood absorbed in some reminiscence of which he was talking eagerly. Neither saw the coming pair. Neither heard the rapid beat of bounding hoofs near them in eager haste. Neither noted that a horseman reined in, threw himself from saddle and handed Burleigh a telegraphic message which, with trembling hands, he opened and then read with starting eyes.

"My heaven, Folsom!" he cried. "I ought to have known something was wrong when I got orders to have every mule and wheel ready. Everything's to be rushed to the Big Horn at once. Just as you predicted, Red Cloud's band has broken loose. There's been a devil of a fight not eighty miles from Frayne!"

[To Be Continued.]

HUMOR FROM THE CAMERA.

Photographers Are Often the Witnesses of Very Queer Phases of Life.

"Many ludicrous developments happen in the studio of a country photographer, aside from what the chemicals bring out in the dark room," said a man who has photographed rustics for many years, relates Lippincott's Magazine. "I recollect one Fourth of July that a young farmer and his sweetheart came to me to have some tintypes taken together. I posed them on a flight of stairs with a balustrade between them. When I came from my dark room after developing the plate, the young fellow stepped up to me and said: 'S-a-y, couldn't ye take that over again?'

"'Why, what's the matter?' I asked, in surprise.

"'We ain't goin' to like that picture a bit,' he answered, evasively.

"'But, why not?' I persisted.

"'Wal,' he blurted out, blushing to the roots of his hair, 'she's too danged fur off.' He refused to pay 50 cents for a new sitting, so at last they bore away the tintypes as they were. But the next day he came back to my gallery very wrathful. 'Sa-a-y,' he fairly shouted when he saw me, 'take that durned girl off this picture. 'I'm mad with her.'

"Often when I have my head under the cloth to get the focus, loving couples, confident that I cannot possibly see them, take advantage of the moment to kiss each other fervidly, but with great silence. I remember, too, coming out of my dark room one time to find a rustic with one of my bottles pouring a thick, dark, liquid into the hollow of his hand. 'I guess you don't mind if I use a little of your hair ile,' he said, and promptly rubbed the stuff into his hair. It was a varnish for negatives, made to dry and harden very rapidly, and before I could get that picture taken, hurrying feverishly, he had to go out and get his head shaved. It is hard to believe how 'green' people can really be in this age and generation until a man drives a tintype studio on wheels through the rural districts of our fair land."

A Large Yarn.

"Yep!" said the veracious Kansan, from whom the inquisitively inclined tourist from New England was trying to corkscrew a characteristic story. "It was kinder funny, come to think about it. You see, the cow was picketed out with a 90-foot lariat, and the wind ketched her and whooped her up in the air plumb the whole length of the rope, and held her there till the storm was over. And then she climbed down safe and sound to the ground. Aw, the wind cuts up some mighty queer capers here sometimes, lemme tell you, stranger!"—Puck.

A Reasoner.

"Mrs. Featherwell's new hat is the very latest style, isn't it?" remarked Mr. Blykins.

"Yes," answered his wife. "But how did you know it? You say you pay no attention to fashions."

"There couldn't be any mistake in this case. If it weren't in the latest style, she wouldn't dare wear anything so ugly."—Washington Star.